



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **California's Professional Licenses Take Centerstage at PACT summit**

*Event Seeks to Help Agencies, Law Enforcement, Private Groups Protect Consumers*

SACRAMENTO – California's professional and trade licenses and their importance to consumer protection will be on display in November, as the Department of Consumer Affairs' licensing agencies come together for an extraordinary conference in Los Angeles.

The summit, dubbed PACT for Professionals Achieving Consumer Trust, will be held November 17-21 at the Westin Los Angeles Airport hotel, 5400 West Century Boulevard. It will be hosted by the California Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and the California Consumer Affairs Association.

Bringing together government agencies, consumer organizations, law enforcement and the public, PACT's goal is to improve consumer protection by fostering better communication and cooperation.

"The PACT summit will give all of us an awesome opportunity to share ideas, open lines of communication and build partnerships, all to better serve California's consumers," said DCA Director Carrie Lopez, who conceived the meeting. "PACT will help reiterate the importance of California's professional and trade licenses both to the state's economy and the public at large"

Nearly of DCA 40 boards and bureaus, which licenses 2.4 million professions, trades and businesses, will be on hand during the course of the weeklong event.

— More —

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2-2-2

In addition to the boards and bureaus board meetings, the summit will feature a number of panel discussions and training sessions specially designed for board members, law enforcement and consumer advocates. The public is welcome to attend these functions.

One major topic that will be discussed is the future of California's licensee population. The state's growing population threatens to outpace the number of licensees. This phenomenon is already evident in the well-publicized shortage of registered nurses and other allied health professionals. But there are also concerns in other areas.

Doug Hoffner, Acting Secretary for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, will lead a panel discussion exploring strategies and opportunities for ensuring an adequate supply of licensed professionals for the state's workforce.

Other issues that will be discussed either at board meetings or workshops include:

- **The New Frontier: Virtual Practitioners** —How can standards be enforced when practitioners go online? What are the rules for online practice? Should existing standards be adapted to promote online practice?
- **Serving the Underserved Deserving** — This session will discuss California's current demographic profile, how to reach underserved consumers, such as non-English speakers and immigrants, and the barriers that make outreach difficult.
- **Economic Downturn: Survival 101** — The economic downturn has deeply affected consumers by making them more vulnerable to the rising number of schemes, scams, and rip-offs. This session will examine how to protect consumers and licensees during these difficult economic times.
- **E-prescribing** — The system is designed to streamline the prescription process and cut down on errors. Despite the advantages of e-prescribing barriers to implementing such systems remain. We'll take a look at e-prescribing from the standpoint of patients, pharmacies, and prescribers.

## California's Professional Licenses Take Centerstage at PACT summit

3-3-3

- **Prescription Drug Labeling** — The Board of Pharmacy will focus on prescription container labels as California moves forward to redesign and standardize labels so they become more patient-centered.
- **Green Auto Repair Stations** — With nearly 35,000 licensed auto repair facilities operating in California, we have the collective potential to significantly reduce pollution generated in the state and create a cleaner environment for California consumers. The Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) initiates its Green Station Recognition Program.
- **Guide Dog Day** — The State Board of Guide Dogs for the Blind is celebrating the contributions that guide dogs have made to the lives of the visually impaired. The president of the Board, who is blind himself, will be available to discuss a number of issues, including access rights for the blind and their dogs.

For a full PACT agenda and schedule, visit the DCA Web site at

<http://www.dca.ca.gov/summit/>

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